



191 US 191 Corridor Study

Four Corners to Beaver Creek



Study Area

The study will examine US 191 between the intersection with Huffine Lane/Norris Road/Jackrabbit Lane in Four Corners (RP 81.9) and the intersection with Beaver Creek Road (RP 45.3) near Ophir School.



Introduction

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), in partnership with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), local jurisdictions, resource agencies, and the public is developing a corridor study of US Highway 191 (US 191) between the developed areas of Four Corners and Big Sky. US 191 connects the greater Bozeman and Belgrade areas to West Yellowstone and Yellowstone National Park. The corridor generally parallels the Gallatin River and provides access to National Forest lands. The corridor also serves numerous individual residences, rural subdivisions, and commercial enterprises.

In recent years, the area has experienced substantial growth which has put considerable strain on existing infrastructure resulting in increased traffic, reduced travel times, and concerns for safety. Although a number of planning efforts and construction projects have occurred in recent years to help address these concerns, improvements to the corridor have been complicated due to physical, financial, and environmental constraints.

Purpose

The US Highway 191 Corridor Study is a pre-environmental study that allows for early planning-level coordination with the public, stakeholders, and environmental resource agencies. The goal of the study is to identify short- and long-term improvements to address safety, geometric, and environmental concerns based on the needs presented. The study will help ensure an efficient transition from transportation planning to future project development/environmental review, if any, based on need and funding availability. This planning-level study is not a design or construction project.

Get Involved

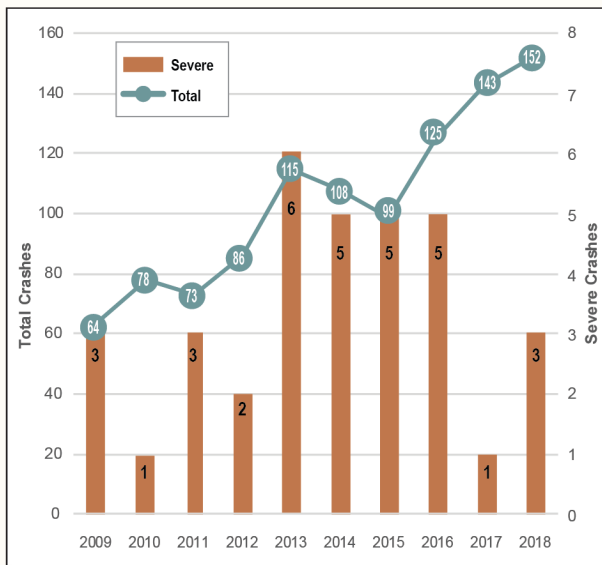
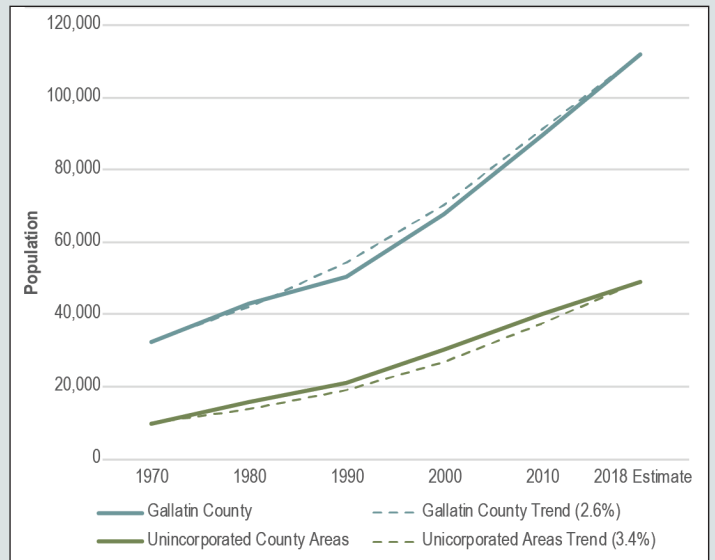
Public comments will be considered to better understand potential issues, concerns, opportunities, and constraints. To submit comments, view documents, and to learn more about the project please visit:

Project Website: www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/US191

Future Growth

The population in Gallatin County has grown at a rate of 2.6% per year over the past 48 years. This is nearly three times faster growth than Montana (0.9%) and slightly slower than the unincorporated areas in the county (3.4%). The number in jobs in Gallatin County has increased by about 3.8% per year over the past 37 years. Bozeman and Big Sky are some of the largest employment centers in the county.

As the population increases in the area surrounding US 191, traffic on the roadway will also increase, which can contribute to safety and operational concerns. Accommodating future growth is important when considering improvement options for the corridor.



Safety

Crash data for the corridor was provided by the MDT for the 10-year period between January 1st, 2009, and December 31st, 2018. There were 1,077 crashes reported along US 191 during the analysis period. The following crash trends were noted:

- Wild animal crashes = 24% of crashes
- Fixed object crashes (22% of crashes) - typically occurred on tight curves or narrow sections of the canyon
- 101 rear-end crashes from Four Corners to Gallatin Gateway
- Rollover crashes = 12% of crashes; 68% on snowy, icy, frost-covered, slushy, or wet roads
- Adverse road conditions and dark-unlit lighting conditions were common factors in crashes

Traffic Conditions

Traffic has generally shown high growth over the past 20 years. Between 1999 and 2018, traffic increased at an annual rate of 2.4% which was applied to existing traffic volumes for the 2040 projected traffic analysis. The following traffic observations were made:

- Heavy vehicle traffic = 9-12% of vehicle mix
- Weekend traffic ~20-30% lower than weekdays
- Volumes are 70% higher during summer than winter
- Increasing vehicle delay at intersections
- US 191 is operating below targets due to capacity, limited passing opportunities, and access density

